



BOARD REPORT: December 9, 2021

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Okanagan Basin

WATER BOARD

Okanagan Basin Water Board Meeting Highlights

OBWB Directors

Sue McKortoff - Chair,
Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen

Cindy Fortin - Vice-Chair,
Regional District of Central Okanagan

Victor Cumming, Regional District of North Okanagan

Rick Fairbairn, Regional District of North Okanagan

Bob Fleming, Regional District of North Okanagan

James Baker, Regional District of Central Okanagan

Colin Basran, Regional District of Central Okanagan

Doug Holmes, Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen

Rick Knodel, Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen

Chris Derickson, Okanagan Nation Alliance

Bob Hrasko, Water Supply Association of B.C.

Scott Boswell, Okanagan Water Stewardship Council

The next regular meeting of the OBWB will be held February 1, 2022 at 10 a.m. Location TBD.

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Board receives update on mussel outreach partnership: Okanagan and Similkameen Invasive Species Society (OASISS) Executive Director Lisa Scott reported on this summer's invasive mussel prevention efforts. The OBWB provides funds to OASISS to extend the efforts of its 'Don't Move A Mussel' campaign to water recreationists, retailers, yacht clubs and others. OASISS delivered a digital package of outreach materials to 102 interested water-recreation businesses and groups, surveyed 977 watercraft at 18 launches, created five information videos, and recruited 19 volunteers to monitor for mussels off personal docks and survey shorelines for invasive clams. Some 14 substrate monitors were deployed and 148 water samples were taken on five Okanagan lakes. Testing of these, and another 750 samples around B.C., came back negative for mussels.

'Don't Move A Mussel' campaign draws three-fold increase in website visitors: Directors received final numbers for its 2021 invasive mussel awareness campaign. This year included updates to the [Don't Move A Mussel](#) (DMM) website with new creative which was also used on billboards, social media and digital ads. Promotional materials included sandwich boards, postcards and 'mussel' shirts. With a \$50,450 investment from OBWB-OkWaterWise and in-kind support, this year's campaign is valued at \$61,250. Website traffic was the highest since the campaign began in 2013, with 20,935 visits, May 1 to Oct. 15, three time the numbers for the same period in 2020. The board was also provided provincial inspection numbers, noting 17 mussel-infested watercraft were intercepted coming into B.C., mid-May to October, with eight headed to the Okanagan.

'Make Water Work' summer conservation campaign sees success: The OBWB board received a report on its annual outdoor water conservation campaign. Highlights include 16,163 visits to the [Make Water Work](#) (MWW) website, May 1 to Oct. 15, the greatest number since the valley-wide campaign began in 2011. Related news stories also more than doubled the average since 2011. The campaign included a refreshed website, with creative replicated on billboards, bus shelters, benches, and sandwich boards. There was advertising on Global Okanagan, and online with Castanet, digital and social media. Promotional materials were provided to partners from local governments, water utilities, garden centres and irrigation businesses. There was also a contest for a \$750 WaterWise yard upgrade. Thanks to significant in-kind support from media partners, the campaign leveraged \$55,263 to deliver a campaign worth \$100,873.

Local water education guides distributed to Okanagan schools: The board was updated on distribution of the "Our Relationship with Water in the Okanagan" education guides. The guide meets the demand for place-based learning, looking at water and climate change in the Okanagan. They were developed with several partners, including Syilx knowledge keepers, bridging Western science and traditional knowledge. Okanagan school districts (SD) have responded enthusiastically and copies have now been delivered for each school in SD 22, 23, 67 and 53. The guides are also online at bit.ly/OkWWeduc-guides.

Okanagan flood resilience discussed: Directors were told the B.C. Select Standing Committee on Finance and Governance Services have recommended the 2022 provincial budget include OBWB's request for \$1 million/year for five years to update the Okanagan Lake Regulation System.

For more information, please visit: www.OBWB.ca